



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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POSTAL WORKER AND HUSBAND PLEAD GUILTY TO STEALING POSTAL FUNDS

PHOENIX, ARIZONA -- The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona announced that on September 26, 2003, Tanya Vanwinkle, a United States Postal worker, age 26, pled guilty to Misappropriation of Postal Funds in federal district court in Phoenix, Arizona. Her husband, Jonathan Vanwinkle, pled guilty to aiding and abetting his wife in such misappropriation.

Tanya Vanwinkle was hired by the United States Postal Service as a postal clerk at the Chinle, Arizona Post Office on July 19, 1997. Her duties as a clerk included maintaining box rent records, mail distribution, window service duties, and assisting with close-out procedures. Ms. Vanwinkle was provided with an access key to the Chinle Post Office, as were all other Postal Service employees. She also had the access to the safe where funds and property belonging to the United States were kept. Beginning in November of 2000, Ms. Vanwinkle entered the Chinle Post Office before and after business hours without authorization and on seven separate occasions, stole over \$51,000.00 in United States postal funds. On three occasions, her husband drove her to the Chinle Post Office and waited for her in their car while she committed the above referenced thefts.

A conviction for misappropriation of funds and aiding and abetting thereof carries a maximum penalty of 10 years, a \$250,000 fine or both.

Sentencing is set before the Honorable James A. Teilborg on December 8, 2003.

The investigation in this case was conducted by Diana Clevanger of the United States Postal Inspection Service.

The prosecution is being handled by Ashley Adams-Feldman, Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix, Arizona.

CASE NUMBER:

RELEASE NUMBER: 2003-168

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